

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
November 13, 2002

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Thomas K. Borne
Steven Campbell
Mike Kennedy
Sylvia Kiel
Peggi Little
Dr. J. Douglas Nelson

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Alfonso Lerma, Jr.
Betty Martin
Katherine Startin

Chairman Sylvia Kiel called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. The meeting was held in the Indiana Government Center South, 402 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Vice Chairman Kennedy announced that a quorum of the Commission was present.

A motion was made and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the Commission meeting of September 11, 2002. The motion carried.

Chairman Kiel announced the proposed meeting date schedule for the 2003 Commission. The dates suggested were:

January 8
March 12
May 14
June 11
July 9
September 10
November 12

A motion to approve the meeting schedule was seconded and unanimously approved.

Chairman Kiel welcomed Pat Moss as the new Executive Director of SSACI and asked her to give her Executive Director's report. Mrs. Moss thanked the Commission and SSACI staff for their support and said that she looks forward to working with the Commission. She commented on the agency's budget initial proposal discussion and how it differed from the recommended budget that was approved by the Commission for Higher Education last week.

The Chairman asked Mr. Obergfell to deliver the Grant Division report. Mr. Obergfell referred to the PowerPoint presentation slides in each member's packet. He said that the agency, more specifically SSACI's Outreach coordinator Kathy Moore, in conjunction with the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association (ISFAA) developed the presentation and was on tour throughout the state doing financial aid workshops for high school counselors. He said a follow up on the success of the workshops would be presented at the next meeting. Mr. Obergfell stated that the US Department is mailing SSACI a supply of 2003-2004 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which is yellow.

Mr. Obergfell mentioned that the agency worked with the U.S. Department of Education on the FAFSA to emphasize the agency's filing date deadline change. The new 2003-04 FAFSA will list Indiana's filing deadline as follows: "March 10 date received, no longer date postmarked". Mr. Obergfell mentioned that staff is investigating the possibility of sending postcards to students who have a semester left of eligibility to inform them that the state's deadline date is March 10, 2003 date RECEIVED as opposed to date postmarked. Pat Moss commended Dennis for the hours of negotiations spent to have the extra line put on the FAFSA.

Chairman Kiel called on Pat Moss, in the absence of Director Floyd Worley, to speak on behalf of the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program. Ms. Moss introduced Seana Murphy as the new Deputy Director of the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program. Floyd Worley will become the Director of the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program. In addition, Ms. Moss gave a brief overview of the statewide GEAR UP Conference held in Indianapolis on November 1 and the subsequent annual Parents' Conference on November 1 & 2. She stated that over 300 parents and staff attended the Parents' Conference held at the Embassy Suites North and heard presentations about parenting, financial aid, student support services, ISTEP, and other topics of interest.

The Chairman asked Nick Vesper to lead the discussion on ways the agency might deal with possible reductions in the funding of its grant programs due to state revenue shortfalls expected in the next biennium. Mr. Vesper prefaced his remarks by saying that SSACI has and continues to encourage all interested parties to submit ideas with respect to how the agency might best deal with level or limited funding increases and the residual effects it would have on SSACI awards. In short, he said that the agency is exploring alternative award methodologies to help mitigate potential funding deficiencies. He asked that interested parties submit suggestions to SSACI in writing.

Mr. Vesper said that this year SSACI submitted a budget that is about \$102 million over the agency's current biennium budget to meet the demands of an anticipated large number of students enrolled in higher education in Indiana and substantial tuition increases. He said that to understand the significance of SSACI's budget request, it needs to be put in the context of the fact that the growth in state spending for the 2004-06 budget has been limited to 3 ½%.

Mr. Vesper stated that the Indiana Commission for Higher Education's (ICHE) budget recommendation have to go to the appropriate legislative committees who will hold public hearings. He said that SSACI's hearing is tentatively scheduled for December 17, 2002 (time and location are not yet known) in which the agency will have an opportunity to make its case for funding increases. Mr. Vesper noted that the agency will have to propose different methods of allocating financial aid over the next biennium given assumptions about what the budget is likely to look like. He said that at the Commission's last meeting staff proposed some award models based on an overall 3 ½% budget. He said ICHE's budget recommendations include a much higher increase than the 3 ½% and thus it presents the agency with an opportunity to increase the level of awards absent level funding or increases less than this percentage.

Mr. Vesper commented that the final answer insofar as SSACI's budget is concerned will not come until the state legislature passes a budget bill. He said that only then will the agency know for sure what it will have to work with and only then will the agency know with certainty what award levels SSACI will be able to fund for the first and possibly the second year of the biennium. Mr. Vesper reiterated that the agency has raised SSACI's funding challenges to different groups and has invited interested parties to suggest different ideas with respect to how the agency can deal with the allocation of financial aid. Mr. Vesper extended an invitation to those at the meeting to comment.

Vice Chairman Kennedy said the Commission is listening to ideas and reviewing options to see what works best and he too encouraged interested parties to submit suggestions to the Commission. Mr. Anthony Maidenberger, Vice President of Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI) submitted suggestions in writing from Hans Giesecke, President of ICI. Mr. Maidenberger said that ICI's suggestions were presented at ICHE's recent meeting. Steve Morris from Indiana University asked if ICI's proposal could be posted on SSACI's web site and Mr. Vesper affirmed that this would be done.

With no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved, seconded and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned.

State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana

By _____
Sylvia Kiel, Chairman

By _____
Dr. J. Douglas Nelson, Secretary